

ExceleRate Illinois

The NEW Quality Rating and Improvement System

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Success



Today's Agenda

- Illinois Education Goals, Reform Agenda, Educational Continuum
- ExceleRate Illinois
 - Benefits
 - Background
 - Framework, Domains and Standards
 - Transition and Next Steps
- View from the Field: Kathy Villano, Jodi Scott

The State's Education Goals

- Increase percentage of Illinoisans with a high quality, industry-recognized degree or credential from 43% to 60% by 2025
- 80% of all children will demonstrate “full readiness” at kindergarten entry by 2021

Our Reform Agenda

- Deeper alignment, integration across various systems (child care, Preschool for All/Prevention Initiative, Head Start/Early Head Start)
- Identify all high need children/families; provide high quality supports and programs
- Increase quality of early learning and development programs in Illinois

Educational Continuum

- Early childhood education significantly improves the educational and life success of all children.
- Learning begins early. Every child deserves a good start in an environment that is safe, healthy, emotionally supportive, and cognitively stimulating.
- The quality of early learning programs is a foundational element of educational persistence, school success, college/career readiness, and successful transition to adulthood.



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ExceleRate Illinois Background

- Illinois developed a universal Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) for all Early Learning and Development Programs serving children in groups
- ExceleRate Illinois sets high standards of quality for all programs and includes:
 - School-based preschool (including Preschool for All)
 - Head Start and center-based Early Head Start
 - Child care centers
 - Private, licensed preschool programs
 - Licensed family child care homes (2015)

ExceleRate Illinois Background

- Criteria developed through 16-month process
- Early Learning Council Sub-Committee with representatives including:
 - ISBE, IDHS, IDCFS
 - Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs)
 - Child Care Providers
 - School Districts
 - Head Start
 - Illinois Association for the Education of Young Children
 - Advocacy Groups

ExceleRate Illinois: One set of standards, multiple forms of evidence

- ExceleRate Illinois recognizes variety of program monitoring
- Programs use different forms of evidence to demonstrate they meet quality standards
 - Preschool for All monitoring
 - Head Start federal reviews and other monitoring systems
 - On-site assessment by National Louis University
 - Accreditation (pending review of accreditation systems' alignment with ExceleRate Illinois standards)

ExceleRate Illinois Benefits

- Focuses providers on whole child development, children's learning
- Defines consistent set of standards for continuous quality improvement
- Encourages providers to access, stay current with emerging research, best practices and information, training resources
- Connects providers with expert consultants and assessment professionals
- Emphasizes developmental screening and services
- Curriculum aligns with Illinois Early Learning Guidelines and Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards

ExceleRate Illinois Benefits

- WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?
- Common standards of quality
- Transparency and rigor
- Embedded Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) framework
- Students entering your school will be better prepared

ExceleRate Illinois Circles of Quality



ExceleRate Illinois Framework

- Licensing
- Bronze Circle of Quality = A robust series of trainings over range of topics, laying the foundation of every program's toolkit, plus rising standards for staff qualifications
- Silver Circle of Quality = Verified scores on Learning Environment, Instructional Quality, and other standards; meeting higher standards for staff qualifications.
- Gold Circle of Quality = Demonstrated high quality on all 15 ExceleRate standards, verified by independent assessor
- Awards of Excellence = Recognizes best practice for fostering developmental gains for at-risk children.

Quality Awards of Excellence

- Awards for implementing research-based best practices
 - Preschool Instruction
 - Infant/Toddler Education & Care
 - Family & Community Engagement
 - Linguistically & Culturally Appropriate Practices
 - Inclusion of Children with Special Needs
- Standards can be viewed on the OECD website
- Effective supports for programs seeking highest levels of quality (in progress)
- Move the needle beyond Gold Circle

Comprehensive “Block” Approach

- Program must meet ALL criteria at a given level to receive rating
- Flexible approach; NOT a “gotcha” system; ongoing, careful review of data to determine need for policy tweaks to ensure we capture the best program practices

Site Level Ratings

- PFA programs spread among many schools and community-based child care centers
 - each school with 3+ classrooms is rated at individual school level and receives a rating
 - School sites with 1 or 2 classrooms each: rated with the group at the program/district level
- PFA classrooms contracted within a community-based child care center will be rated within the site's overall rating

Domains, Standards & Evidence

- 4 Domains
 - Teaching & Learning
 - Family & Community Engagement
 - Leadership & Management
 - Qualifications & Continuing Education
- 15 Standards
 - Quality evidence required to show achievement of each standard

Domains & Standards

<http://www.excelerateillinois.com/resources>

Domain	Standard
Teaching & Learning	1A: Learning Environment
	1B: Curriculum
	1C: Instructional Quality
	1D: Child Screening
	1E: Child Assessment
	1F: Inclusion of Children with Special Needs
Family & Community Engagement	2A: Family & Community Engagement
	2B: Transitions
Leadership & Management	3A: Program Administration
	3B: Group Size and Staff/Child Ratios
	3C: Continuous Quality Improvement
	3D: Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Practice
Qualifications & Continuing Education	4A: Director Qualifications
	4B: Staff Qualifications
	4C: Staff Development

How Preschool for All Aligns with ExceleRate Illinois

- Program ratings based on ISBE triennial monitoring by National Louis University
- Gold Circle standards are aligned with PFA contract requirements
 - Curriculum and assessment aligned with IELDS
 - Certified teacher and qualified assistant
 - Professional development
 - Continuous quality improvement evaluation
- Assuming compliance with overall grant requirements, Gold vs. Silver rating depends on program's Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) scores.



Other community-based programs contributing to your school enrollment

- Community-based childcare programs: assessed under same process by National Louis University
- Accreditation may provide evidence for these standards. Accrediting bodies must demonstrate alignment of their standards with ExceleRate Illinois
- Head Start programs demonstrate their evidence through federal review monitoring protocol

Family Child Care Homes Enrollment in ExceleRate Illinois

- Standards are in development
- Implementation: 2015

Statewide System Engaged in ExceleRate Illinois

- ISBE, IDHS, IDCFS and OECD creating unified plan to provide professional development to early childhood workforce
- PFA coaches and StarNet Training and Technical Support
- Head Start Training and Technical Assistance Centers
- Child Care: Quality Specialists for training and technical Assistance, Quality Counts grants, Accreditation funds and other program improvement supports available through Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs)

ExceleRate Illinois: Next Steps

- PFA programs, HS and EHS: formal enrollment protocols are in development
- Child care centers previously rated are dually – enrolled in ExceleRate Illinois, and in transition to alignment with new standards
- Accreditation crosswalks continue
- Curriculum crosswalks are underway
- Sample policies, tools and other resources available soon



View from the Field

- Kathy Villano, Program Director, ECDEC Preschool for All and FIND Prevention Initiative Programs in northwest Cook County at The Center: Resources for Teaching and Learning
- Jodi Scott, Regional Superintendent, Henderson-Mercer-Warren Regional Office of Education





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